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THE Commonweal

WE have seen the Child that is born and the choirs of angels praising the Lord.

Alleluia, Alleluia.

A little child is this day born unto us, and He shall be called God, the Mighty One.

While all things were in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course, thy Almighty Word, O Lord, came down from thy royal throne. —The Office of Christmas

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The Catholic Worker

December, 1962

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Mary Lathrop

GOING HUNGRY ON THE LAND,
Correspondence of a Migrant Worker

Dorothy Day

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THE COMMONWEAL

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Christmas: Hope Made Flesh

WHATEVER the year, Christmas cannot fail to come as a shock to the Christian. For one can no sooner begin contemplating the awesome mystery of the birth of Christ, of God made man, then one runs flush into the realities of human life. Compared with the promise and the hope of Christ's entrance into the world, compared with the innocence and simplicity of that entrance, the world in which we live is a jagged and rough one. To be sure, it would be false to say that the world presents an unrelieved picture of suffering and travail; joy, purely human joy, can be found, as can be found peace and progress. But one never knows how long it will last. The wise man is the one who hedges his optimism.

Yet it may well be asked whether it is proper or reasonable for the Christian to adopt the stance of the worldly-wise? If, for the unbeliever, a course of stoic wariness is the only sensible one, is it equally proper for the Christian? Once put, the question has an immediate answer: no. If the birth of Christ has any fundamental meaning it is precisely that optimism and hope have been grounded in the very deepest realities of human existence. For the Christian, hope cannot be looked upon as a luxury of the weak, a prop for the anxious, but rather as a simple duty—a duty grounded in the will of God and verified for all time by the sending of His only-begotten Son as a sign of His love. In the birth of Christ hope was made flesh.

Yet if we know these things, if we have not allowed ourselves to forget them, we still look for signs that the promise remains good. We believe, but we are constantly stricken with our unbelief. Like Thomas we want to see for ourselves.

But where, if we want to see, should we look? Where can we see some hint that the apparently endless cycle of human birth, death and anguished groping is not what it appears to be; some hint that the cycle is, in hidden truth, a straight line leading to a glorious consummation? Should we look, for instance, at the life and execution of Adolf Eichmann? At the Chinese invasion of India? At the traffic tolls and accident rates reported daily in our papers? No, we are not likely to find much in those directions.

WHERE WE may look profitably, however, is toward those recent events which give promise of breaking through the long-established patterns of a folly-laden past. For the Christian world, the ecumenical movement is little less than a very real miracle. After four hundred years, Christians have begun talking with one another, repenting for their sins of division and schism. For the Catholic, the Second Vatican Council seems on the verge of bringing into being that revivified, re-animated Church which Pope John in his great wisdom saw as the burning need of our times. To be sure, the Council is not over; but already enough has been accomplished to put the pessimist and the cynic on the defensive. The Church, it has been said, cannot be changed. Yet, before our very eyes, it is changing. The Holy Spirit is at work.

We do not have to look only toward the Church or toward the Christian world to see progress. We can look also into that large arena of human affairs where, ordinarily, men and nations are pitted against one another for the sake of false patriotism, national self-interest, and the survival of the strongest. Curiously, we do not see quite the usual scene.

The battles, the rancor, and the suspicion are certainly there; but also there are an uncommon number of men intent upon finding a way out of the arena. Some of them are sitting in Geneva looking for ways to end nuclear testing and seeking means to bring about disarmament. Still others are sitting in the United Nations, seeking, by dull and long and exasperating talk, to save the nations from killing one another. Everywhere, one can find

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men and governments who see, better than any other generation, the utter stupidity of war, the utter madness of defending life and principle by means of weapons which wreak indiscriminate death and destruction.

Of course, the stoic or the cynic can always respond that the ecumenical movement, the Second Vatican Council and the increasing recognition of the futility of war prove very little. Who can know what unexpected turns history may take, dashing all our hopes, proving them to be so many more illusions? There is no answer to this question. A retort is impossible. We can only wait and see.

But it is the way we wait which counts. We can wait with fatalism for the future; or we can wait with Christian hope. What is the difference? If we wait with fatalism we become victims of time and history. If we wait with Christian hope, we become cooperators with the Lord of History. The God who became man did not promise us an earthly paradise; He Himself was born in a manger. But He did promise, and offered His life and death as a guarantee, that God would guide and illuminate those who believed in Him. He did promise that those who worked for His aims and with His charity would not find their work in vain. We wait; but as those who wait for life and not death.

The House vs. the Women

THE LADIES, bless them, have done it again. This time, the international conspiracy known as the Female Sex has thrown a scarf into the gears of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. For the Committee's three-day investigation of the Women Strike for Peace movement has closed without any satisfactory results. Carrying that inquiry beyond the battle of the sexes, however, the hearings must raise serious questions about the effectiveness of both the Committee and the movement.

Given the fact of Communist subversive tactics, the House Committee's job of investigating public charges of Communist activity can at least be defended, along with very strong misgivings. In the present instance, the matter at hand was the public allegation of Communist penetration into the Peace Movement as at whole, for which the Women Strike for Peace was a case in point. The seven women actually subpoenaed all refused to answer questions about their connection with the Communist Party, past or present, some on grounds of the First, others on grounds of the Fifth Amendment. The fact is that the hearings ended without the issues being so much as clarified.

Such results only serve to arouse and deepen public suspicions. Yet it cannot be said that the ladies tried very hard to defend themselves. For in some instances the witnesses displayed such a naiveté as to be positively destructive of any confidence in their ability to resist subversion.

Asked by the Committee if she planned any action "to prevent Communists from assuming positions of leadership in Women Strike for Peace or to eliminate Communists who have already assumed such positions," Mrs. Dagmar Wilson, one of the founders and spokesmen for the movement, answered simply, "Certainly not."

When questioned further, Mrs. Wilson admitted that she had no way of controlling nor did she desire to control those who wished to join the movement. Indeed she would welcome Communists and those of any other political persuasion, if only they believed in peace. Mrs. Wilson further admitted that the Movement had no formal organization and no real leaders. And in a phrase that rings, if it does not enlighten, she asserted, "Unless everyone in the whole world joins us in this fight, then God help us."

Mrs. Wilson's remarks were hardly calculated to win confidence for her movement. Such an ill-defined and heedless organization is, of course, a perfect target for Communist subversion. Anyone whose memory goes back to comparable movements of the thirties can testify to the thoroughness with which such groups were undermined by Communist infiltration.

It is, moreover, a fact that Kremlin policy statements encourage Communist membership in peace movements. There is a hitch in the ideology of such participation for Communists, however, and that is a fatal one for the peace movements. It is that Communist members must reserve the right to in-

Next Week

ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN will contribute the first column in what will be a regular monthly feature by him, "A Protestant Viewpoint." Formerly Auburn Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Seminary, New York, Dr. Brown is presently Professor of Religion in the Special Programs in Humanities at Stanford University. The author of *The Spirit of Protestantism* and co-author (with Father Gustave Weigel, S.J.) of *An American Dialogue,* he was recently appointed an observer for the second session of the Vatican Council, representing the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the World Presbyterian Alliance.

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voke Lenin's doctrine of "waging wars that may prove necessary in the interest of socialism."

Every man of good will wants peace. But the question is still, Peace at what price? In its irresponsible attitude toward the reality of world politics, the Women Strike for Peace seems to offer a blank check which men of good will cannot in conscience countersign. That is not to say that such men do not "believe in peace." Nor is it to say that the peace movement in general must be seen as a threat to security or a Communist happy hunting ground. On the other hand, maybe it's just the ladies. They did, after all, assure Chairman Walter of the House Committee that "the masculine mind would never understand them."

Nuclear Defenses

BRITAIN and the United States find themselves greatly at odds over the proposed abandonment of our Skybolt missile program. This missile, to have a thousand-mile range and tipped with a thermonuclear warhead with the explosive capability of a half million tons of T.N.T., would be powered by solid fuel. It comprised an essential part of the British jet-bomber program for the later 1960's.

America, for its part, has been experiencing much difficulty in developing this missile, primarily for its own B-52's; five tests have resulted in as many failures. After spending a half billion in the vain effort to make it operational, the Defense Department hesitates to commit two billions more when unconvinced as to its urgency. The American arsenal already includes the Hounddog, which a bomber can release five hundred miles away from its target, but the British insist that they need a weapon of twice that range.

Within NATO itself there are wide divergences of opinion. The United States wants a substantial increase in conventional defense forces, with the various European allies supplying more troops. This country would like to have control of the thermonuclear weapons—intermediate range, which can be launched from Polaris submarines, and intercontinental, which can be fired from underground silos in the American homeland. France and Britain insist on their own deterrence systems.

Meanwhile the American public needs to pay greater attention to the implications of the intercontinental Minuteman, since the first of its sixteen launching bases has now been made operational in Montana by the Air Force. This wide-destruction missile can be in the air within seconds of the President's order. New information or a change of mind on his part two minutes later would be of no avail, as there is no means of arresting a Minuteman's deadly flight. Accordingly, the ever-present dangers of triggering a thermonuclear war by accident—through human failure or mechanical defect—have been increased manifold. Only two men can set it off on its irrevocable trajectory. Manned bombers can be called back, while Atlas, Titan and Polaris missiles each require several men and much more intricate procedures before they blast off. America's new Minutemen are prototypes of the dread "push-button" war which will soon confront mankind unless agreement can be reached to ban further tests and then to embark on progressive, controlled thermonuclear disarmament to preclude the further spread of such weapons and remove this threat from the world.

New York Blackout

WITHOUT attempting to fix the blame on either party, one must certainly deplore the causes and the effects of New York's news blackout. To date all attempts at mediation have failed, and this strike threatens to go on for a long time. The strike (the four major papers were struck first; the remaining dailies "locked out" their unions) has resulted in nearly twenty thousand men being out of work and in estimated multi-million dollar losses in Christmas trade, owing to lack of advertising.

Advertising, of course, works both ways, and the loss in revenue to some of the papers may force them to fold up entirely. The publisher of the New York *Post*, for one, has as much as served notice about her own paper. In a sense the strike constitutes a turning-point in newspaper history, since the publishers seem determined to resist the unions' demands at any cost, a stance which could give greatly diminishing returns.

The complexities of the present efforts to reach an acceptable solution are sufficient to hold judgments in abeyance. It is enough to know that the workers seek wage increases and fringe benefits of up to thirty-eight dollars a week, and that the publishers take these demands as unreasonable.

Still, it does seem that some such plan as Mr. Joseph Kingsbury-Smith, Publisher of the *Journal-American*, proposed should be tried at least. That is, that both sides recognize a sixty-day truce period during which operations would be resumed and negotiations would continue. At the end of the period the workers could still strike, if they chose. The plan has been rejected this time. It should not go untried in case of future deadlocks. Meanwhile, New York seems hardly the same without its "emblems of the free press."

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Ransoming the Captives

THIS COLUMN is being written for the Christmas issue. In one way, to write on the fate of captives in Cuban prisons is quite out of keeping with the spirit of this joyous season. In another, it is completely appropriate.

It may be that what I have to say will be obviously out of date by the time this appears. I hope so, for the only way this could happen would be the release of the more than eleven hundred Cubans who are in Fidel Castro's prisons.

Much of the situation involving the survivors of the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion is shrouded in mystery, and necessarily so. Dispatches from Cuba are fragmentary and roundabout. Reports from refugee groups in this country are not always accurate. The United States has never officially admitted any part in the invasion attempt, and the Administration's role in current negotiations is not clear. Finally and understandably, the efforts of James B. Donovan, who is negotiating with Castro on behalf of the prisoners, must be carried on with the greatest discretion if the Cuban dictator is not to upset the applecart all over again.

The prisoner deal has been on-again, off-again several times. First Castro wanted $23 million in tractors. This was later changed to sixty-two million dollars in cash, the amount of the fines levied against the prisoners in their trial. Sixty Cubans were actually ransomed months ago, and several times it seemed as if the rest were about to join them in freedom. Each time the hope was dashed.

The last time hopes were high was immediately prior to the confrontation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. over the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. That time the deal called for the delivery of drugs, medicine and baby food in exchange for the prisoners. The retail value of these items in Cuba would run to sixty-two million dollars; the wholesale price here would be less than one-third of that sum.

The Cuban missile crisis killed the hope of an immediate exchange, at least temporarily. Now there is said to be another chance that an exchange on the same terms can be made. But in some quarters the question is still raised: should we enter into such a deal? My answer is an unequivocal yes.

While the United States has not officially admitted its role in the Bay of Pigs operation, there is no doubt in anyone's mind that we were involved. There is, of course, much we still do not know about the matter. To what extent was the affair planned during the Eisenhower Administration? Did the original plan call for air support by the U.S., and did President Kennedy countermand such support at the last minute? What U.S. agencies other than the C.I.A. were involved? Such questions still need to be answered in detail, but even without this information we cannot deny our moral responsibility in the whole affair.

Normally, nations hesitate to pay ransom like this for fear it will encourage other despots to play the same game. But in this case our national involvement in the plight of the captives renders such argument academic. Further, the practice of ransoming the captives is an honored one in Christian tradition, dating back at least as far as the Crusades; I can think of no better time to return to it.

That's all very well, people say, but won't making such an exchange benefit Castro? By entering into such a deal, are we not in fact strengthening the hand of a sworn enemy? For my part, I doubt that sixty-two million dollars would have a substantial effect on Castro's economy, even if it were delivered in cash. In the case of medicine and baby food, which is what the exchange now calls for, it may be that we will help Castro a little bit indirectly, but primarily we would be helping babies and old people—the two groups in the population suffering most from present shortages. Castro is our opponent and we are not likely to change our views on him and his regime, but surely we are not yet waging war on babies and old people.

No one could help being impressed with the spirit displayed by the men in the Cuban prisons. In the long months that have passed since the Bay of Pigs fiasco, they must often have wondered if the outside world had abandoned them. Yet despite sickness and hunger and great pressure, not one of these men has chosen the easy solution of defection to Castro. Such courage deserves the best from us.

Although there is a limit to what the Administration can do in this matter, at least openly, President Kennedy is said to be deeply conscious of our responsibility and deeply committed to doing something about it. It is good that he is, for time is growing short, as N.Y. *Herald Tribune* correspondent Warren Rogers, Jr., pointed out recently.

Photographs of and interviews with the sixty men who have already returned provide grim evidence of the need for fast action. Those released had lost from forty to sixty-five pounds, and they looked like nothing so much as survivors of Dachau or Buchenwald. Eyewitnesses say the men still in prison are as bad or worse off, and hunger and disease continue to take their toll. If they are not helped soon, many of the captives will not live to see another Christmas. If we can do anything about it, I don't think we want that on our national conscience.

JAMES O'GARA

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The First Effort We Must Make Is To Unlearn a Few Things

Christmas in the Liturgy

H. A. REINHOLD

IF WE WANT to understand the twin feasts of Christmas and Epiphany in their true liturgical meaning, we have to unlearn and to explore a great many commonly accepted things. We should be most willing to do so if we don't want our Liturgy to be just a beautiful relic or some ossified pomp without connection with twentieth-century life. The winter cycle of the Christian year is a very complex one and has become strange territory to the minds of most of us.

Of course we could sit down and say: "Well, if it has come to be thus, why not leave it as it is? Aren't you simply indulging in a time-honored fad of excavating ruins for a certain leisure class of intellectuals who are dissatisfied with the common fare of ordinary people? You should not encourage such tendencies of the proud and fastidious. The humble and poor will not follow you anyhow. All you will achieve will be the restlessness of a few more bright people with over-sensitive tastes, dissatisfied with their home-made parish services. They will scatter discontent and upset our parish routine, and they will not be any happier themselves." In other words, let us keep up blissful ignorance and maintain the level of our present standards.

My answer to these critics is: I am sorry, but I have to disturb you. The "truth will out," and deplorable symptoms show that the established way of celebrating Christmas does not prevent a rapid decay of the true Christmas spirit. I don't know what your remedies are. Mine is a proposal to follow the old idea of the Church to enlighten the people and to make them think differently and more correctly, so that then they may also act more correctly. So, here we go.

We said we have to unlearn a few things. That is necessary, and we shall see why. First of all, let us remember that the Church year has two cycles, not three, at least not in the Liturgy of our Missal and Breviary. These two can be most aptly described as the first or Paschal cycle, and the second or Advent cycle. Sounds a bit startling, doesn't it? But we shall see that the shock which toppled the accepted edifice of our notions about the liturgical year was a sort of slum clearance of our minds: a beautiful old building appears after the incongruous and somehow unsightly obstructions have fallen.

Next, let us, for the time being at least, forget our accepted notion that New Year's Day is anything more than a civic event. Liturgically it is certainly neither the end of anything except the octave of Christmas, nor the beginning of anything at all. Our New Year's Eve devotions are a concession to modern minds, but they have no bearing whatever on the liturgical development of the Church year. Now don't be a liturgical fanatic. Don't boycott them, because it would sadden your pastor and your friends. Just give them the right place in your mind, as important for your civic life, your parish, but irrelevant for the liturgical understanding of the Advent or second cycle of the Church year.

WORSE THAN this, almost offensive to pious ears, as some people might call it, is my second appeal: forget also for the time being even the idea that the first Sunday in Advent was the beginning of something basically new. I assume that my readers have already cast out of their minds the idea that the four Sundays of Advent symbolize the "four thousand" years before Christ. That idea should have been forgotten long ago. In Milan they have six Advent Sundays, in the Eastern Church something entirely different. Even in our Roman Liturgy there have been periods of five and six Advent Sundays. This is only incidental, and because some old class books still carry this idea as if nothing had happened. Why say those things?—the people like it—because it is not the likes of people which will serve the people. This idea of the "four thousand" years does not fit into a liturgical understanding, which is, after all, what we need now. The first Sunday in Advent is not a *caesura*, as if there were a deep gap between the last Sunday after Pentecost and the first Sunday of Advent.

The word Advent, *Adventus*, refers to the whole season which has its climax in the Feast of the Epiphany or Theophany. But does this not lessen the status of our beloved Christmas day? Well, if it does, don't ac-

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FATHER H. A. REINHOLD, a long-time contributor, is a well-known leader in the liturgical movement. His most recent book is *The Dynamics of Liturgy*. Because of its continuing relevance, this article is reprinted from The Commonweal for Christmas, 1941.

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cuse the writer. It is liturgical law that the rank of January 6 is higher than that of December 25, and this is not just stickling, for we shall see later that there is a profound reason for it, even if people nowadays ignore it. By the way: In Rome *Befana* has kept its old rank beside or above *Natale*, Christmas.

I suppose my readers are eager to know when this season of Advent begins in the liturgical books and when it ends, always remembering that this *Adventus* is a larger unit than what we nowadays call Advent.

If you are looking for something very abrupt, you will be disappointed. The Roman Liturgy is never abrupt, theatrical, bombastic, and if occasionally one gets such an impression, then something is wrong. Just as night and day flow gently into one another, and as the four seasons develop imperceptibly, the Liturgy is something live, growing and organic. There is never anything frantic, hasty, theatrical in the Liturgy. The Roman spirit is one of virile moderation and majesty. It was this Roman spirit which made the Liturgy. The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, like a leaven, and never like a thunderbolt or an earthquake. Who does not recall the sweetness of early spring, when there are still patches of snow on the ground, yet some of the trees are beginning to unfold the buds of their flowers and leaves? The color symphony of our American Indian summer comes tactfully and gradually, not with a bang.

In mid-September, we have a group of holy days which suggests harvest; the ember days and the triumphal feast of the Holy Cross (September 14). Around these sacred harvest celebrations, when the leaves begin to turn, we also have the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost. Through its psalms and lessons and prayers there sounds a faint tinkle of Christmas bells, that grow more distinct as the Sundays advance. All Saints and All Souls again strike the note of harvest, but even more, they let us glimpse through the half-open gate into the eternal glory of heaven. That is one of the leading motifs of this great season.

LIKE THE mighty brass mellowed by sweet violins of hope and consolation, the last Sunday after Pentecost and the first Sunday of Advent reveal the grandiose theme of the vision of Christ's return, his Parousia: the first, in its terror to Satan and stubborn sinners; the second, with the silver tinge of hope: "Lift up your heads, because the time of your salvation is nigh."

The orchestra of psalms and hymns, of lessons and prayers, never drops these themes: eternity, glory and Parousia. The composer of this celestial symphony then adds two more instruments: the voice of John the Baptist, strong and austere, and of Our Lady, humble, virginal and pure. It is a constant crescendo from the faint *pianissimo* of the early fall toward the majestic, fulfilled sound of the Parousia motif on Christmas and Epiphany, sounding in its last powerful accord on the second day of February, forty days after Christmas the beautiful feast of Candlemas.

Here again the last notes of the Advent theme are blended with the first inkling of the new Paschal cycle which sends out its first messengers on Septuagesima Sunday. The arch of this season spans the interval from the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost to the last Sunday after Epiphany, from Holy Cross to Candlemas.

The grandiose sweep of this liturgical architecture of themes and motifs is visible only after its central theme and mood have been unearthed from medieval and later debris. It would explode the narrow limits of an informal article if we went on to describe the beautiful analogous structure of the Paschal cycle, out of which the Advent cycle flows as the more contemplative heavenward, eternity-laden one.

"What men have done to Christmas!" one could exclaim, if he compared the present vision of this cycle riveted on the foreground alone, with what he finds in the liturgical books. What have men done? They have taken only partial glimpses of this rich fullness, as if the majestic aspects were too overwhelming, until only disconnected, isolated feasts were visible. When you look on a gigantic chain of snow-capped mountains you see how they belong to each other. The same chain submerged under a deep ocean shows only disconnected small islands above the surface. You have to let the water recede, as after the great flood, to understand the whole structure.

The idyllic, emotional, affective attitude of the late middle ages created this flood of submerging forgetfulness and ignorance. Religion as a commodity of life, as an escape—Marx would say "a drug"—encouraged this attitude in the bourgeois age; we seem to want the nice, little things which smooth the edges of life, not that dynamic, fiery power which purified the Roman Empire and burned out all the straw and wood from its edifice until nothing but the true gold remained, to become the temporal shell of Christ's Body, the Holy Roman Church. No wonder this view will at first appear as a frightening vision of eternal values, naked, challenging: *mysterium tremendum.*

NOW, SHOULD we go and burn all our beautiful handcarved cribs, our cozy Christmas trees, our sweet Christmas cards with warm, sweet babes in stables, ox and ass included? Are all our naive shepherd songs to go, the three wise men, the woolly, white poetry of our Nordic winter solstice? Even if our forefathers, those stern men like Leo, Gregory, Ambrose, Augustine and Damasus, those titanic poets, as Sedulius, Venantius and their companions, composed this wonderful drama, are we, the refined, gentle or bourgeois men and women of a dying era, made to stand their sober, grand architecture? We don't build basilicas with mosaics and

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romanesque minsters. Our churches have a drawing-room atmosphere, respectable, full of holy knick-knacks and comfortable things. So why should we live intellectually and spiritually on mountain tops of sublime spirituality?

The answer? *"Qui bene distinguit, bene docet"*: of course nobody advocates throwing present practices into the ash can (or dust bin, if you happen to live in England). Who said so? I don't know if the present general attitude towards the Advent cycle is healthy and as thoroughly Catholic as it should be. A generation whose whole being does not clamor after final resurrection seems to have lost practical faith in it; its creed is at best a docile recitation. If that generation has no objections to our unjust world and does not cry continually in its soul, with tears of despair, after a better world in which justice is King—*"Ecce advenit dominator Dominus"* (Introit of Epiphany)—then there is some suspicion that its Christians don't hunger and thirst any more after justice but are a lot of smug bourgeois, whose life is a pretty picture of comfort, framed with the gilt-edge of a partial religion (for dark hours, and a sort of insurance for an uncertain hereafter).

No wonder that Communists and Nazis (and capitalists) lost patience with us and staged their own parousia, with heaven for the many elect and hell for the few "privileged" of old. People who like this world so well that they don't like to hear about the New Earth and Heaven, must have done something to their faith.

But we can keep all our modern, beloved Christmas trappings, as long as we see through them and as long as we know that there is a reality and a future behind those things of the past. When we celebrate Midnight Mass in Bethlehem "at the crib" as the Missal says, when we go as good pilgrims to the Mass "at dawn" in the Church of the *Anastasis* (Resurrection), and when we see the full glory of the Divine Child in the third Mass, we have already made a seven-league step from the crib idyll towards the full meaning of the Parousia.

The first coming of the Word is the transparent stained glass through which shine the refracted rays of His final triumph. This seems complex and hard to explain. Who says it should be "explained"? Explaining kills it as much as theoretical analysis kills Schubert's unfinished symphony, or an X-ray kills a Cimabue madonna. Celebrate it, live it, plunge into its visions, words, tunes and pictures. The composite gives a simple and profound result in our souls, not a playful savoring of the past, a little comfort here, a small consolation there and so much childlike reminiscing. It is the sound of the organ of eternity which involves us and carries us forward, and faith becomes a dynamic power, not soothing, but propelling us irresistibly in mighty supernatural rhythms. Certainly our crib and things have their place and nobody will take them away; but they have their place and their place is in the foreground, the emotional, historical, meditative side of our religious being. Still, while the world moves on in powerful strides and groans for redemption, let us not forget that not the Babe redeemed it, but the Babe grown Man, crucified, resurrected and sitting at the right hand of the Father, whence He will come to *judge* the living and the dead.

Thus, after the more gentle portals of Christmas are passed, and Nativity-Advent has raised us a step nearer to the Son of Man in His mysteries, we shall be able to understand the most majestic of all His feasts: Theophany, when His Godhead shines through His humanity and the Church sings: "Rise, be light, Jerusalem, for thy Light is come and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. . . ." "Upon a high throne I saw a Man sitting, whom the multitude of spirits adore, singing together: Behold Him, the name of whose *empire* is to *eternity*."

A Light of Revelation to the Gentiles

Not as when she darted in and out
among the willows like the waters
of Shiloh running softly does she
go up to Bethlehem. Nor lithely
as a March wind ago when she swung
the water jar up to her hairs' dark
iridescence and sped home to that

shaft of pure spirit in her door. His
words were bells that rang the centuries
pendant to this timeless moment when
under the shadow of Jehovah
she who was scarcely ripe to girlhood
found herself wonderful with child.
Then from Aries to Capricorn

in the pull of her tides she braided
the dayspring feeding him silence, till
billowed like a small white sail blowing
to port, she beaches in the chalk cave's
sharpest shadow. And what woman who
has born (or not born) but knows her flesh
leap with light to see Mary reach from

her cloak the little woven things and
while hushed seas and islands wait—from
out the bright tegument of her body
unswaddle the *shekinah*, and to
the young Joseph (helpless as any
man at such a moment) turn her face
smiling and hold up the Morning Star.

SISTER M. THERESE

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Jerusalem: City of Peace

ILLTUD EVANS

THE CITY OF Jerusalem is the symbol of peace: its very name declares it. But today it is the symbol above all other of separation; between Arabs and Jews, between Christians among themselves. The history of its conflicts is far older than its walls, and the new buildings of the Israeli sector, gleaming in the brilliant air, are the evidence of the latest division of all. For the armistice that brought to an end the fighting between Israel and the Arab states in 1949 has drifted into what seems an uneasy agreement to disagree. No Arab nation officially so much as recognizes the existence of Israel; but only a few yards beyond the walls of the ancient Arab city a new nation begins. You might be a continent away in space, centuries apart in time.

For the Christian, the Arab-Jewish conflict inevitably creates a problem in sympathies. He has little reason to feel proud of much Christian intervention in the past—even in the recent past, when he remembers the ambiguities of the Balfour Declaration and its aftermath. He can scarcely feel any sort of moral superiority when wars and conquests are in question. If he is at all aware of what the history of the people of God meant in terms of a land and a city set apart as a sacred inheritance, then the return of the Jews to Israel must deeply move him.

Gathered from the ends of the earth, having endured so much through the long centuries of persecution and shame, the scattered people have found their home again. But neither can the Christian be indifferent to the price that has been paid in human suffering or the wrong that has been done. He cannot be blind to the presence of nearly a half-million Arab refugees in Jordan alone, men and women who knew no other land than that they have lost. Kept alive by the United Nations and the devoted work of many voluntary organizations, they are a perpetual reminder of how uncertain the face of justice seems in the Holy Land.

Within the old city the wailing wall is silent now, for no Jew may cross the frontier into any Arab land. Above stands the Dome of the Rock, which has witnessed so much that was invoked in the name of God: Abraham leading Isaac to the sacrifice there, the glory of Solomon's Temple built to enshrine it, Mohammed ascending to heaven on his mysterious night-journey. And still it stands, serene and unchanging: the point of departure, and perhaps at last the point of return, sacred as it is to the three great religions that claim this city for their own.

As for the Christians, their divisions are nowhere so obvious as in Jerusalem, and yet nowhere is the ultimate hope of their reconciliation so surely proclaimed. For all alike have come to this very place because here it was that Christ was crucified and rose from the dead. However deep the divisions of doctrine and of a sundered history may go, in this all are one in intention and desire: to be close to the place where, in the providence of God, the work of redemption was achieved.

THE ANCIENT Churches have long since secured their own privileged areas, and in the Church of the Resurrection (less accurately, but more usually, called the Holy Sepulchre) they have allotted to them their scheduled hours of the day. The ramshackle Church, held together by wooden scaffolding, seems a sad place, improvised, with little of beauty any more to commend it. But justice demands a recognition of the fidelity with which the Franciscans, here as in all the Holy Places in Jordan and Israel alike, fulfill their custodianship in unimaginably difficult circumstances

Little progress seems to have been made in the proposals for reinstating this most venerable of churches. It would be an ecumenical achievement of a high order if the Church that is in fact shared by four (five, if one includes the Ethiopians on the roof) ancient Christian Churches, could once more shine forth in all its splendor as the place of Resurrection.

Events more recent than the separations of long ago have created fresh ironies as well. For instance, the convent of the Sisters of Sion, founded by the convert Jew, Father Ratisbonne, to work for the conversion of the Jews, nowadays can never welcome a single Jew. The convent on the Via Dolorosa stands above a Roman pavement, perhaps the very Lithostrotos on which our Lord stood awaiting the judgment of Pilate. Here, summed up, is the tragedy of Jerusalem today. And the Russian churches and monasteries, with their dwindling and aged communities, are the evidence of another tragedy, that of the Russian Orthodox far away. The two or three old nuns that remain in the Polish hospice are witnesses to an even more recent history.

FATHER ILLTUD EVANS, O.P., a previous contributor, has written for a number of English periodicals. He is the Editor of the English Dominican monthly *Blackfriars*.

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For Jerusalem in a true sense measures the pulse of Christian life throughout the world. For Catholics it cannot possess the special significance that Rome must have as the see of the Vicar of Christ. Nor has it for the Orthodox the associations that have made Constantinople the one patriarchate that is called Ecumenical. To say that Jerusalem is a "neutral" city would indeed be to reduce its uniquely sacred character. But it remains true that the very variety of the Christian bodies that have their foothold here, ranging from the venerable Churches of East and West to the latest inheritors of the Reformation, makes of Jerusalem a place of reconciliation, paradoxical as that may seem.

Some have indeed suggested that the meeting between Pope John and the Patriarch of Constantinople (for which both have so earnestly expressed a desire) might take place in Jerusalem. Nowhere, certainly, would the hopes and prayers of Christians for unity be more appropriately expressed than in the city of peace and of the resurrection from the dead.

It is no part of the Christian vocation to sit in judgment on those who are involved in the political conflicts that cloud the Holy Land today. But it could be that the example of Christians within the Holy Land, divided indeed, but praying and working for the unity that would bring their divisions to an end, might show what reconciliation means. The day of unity may be infinitely far off; but the day of charity is now, and the place for its operations is here.

HAPPILY, there are many signs that the grosser suspicions and resentments which have disgraced the relationships between Christians are lessening. And the increasing numbers of pilgrims that are once more coming to Jerusalem can be an impressive witness to a charity that does not pretend that divisions do not exist, or do not matter, but none the less is determined to do nothing to exacerbate them.

There are in fact countless opportunities to help in healing these divisions. It is, for many who come from countries that know very different traditions from those of the Middle East, a revelation in itself to be confronted with the rich variety of Christian tradition, in language and rite and custom, within the Catholic Church, quite apart from the evidence everywhere of the continuing life of the Eastern Churches that do not look to Rome.

Pilgrimages, which themselves unite Christians of different allegiances, have in the last few years given practical expression to this sense of Jerusalem as the city of reconciliation. The shared experience of a voyage, whose single aim transcends the evident fact of separation, can do much to create the mutual understanding which any hope of ultimate unity requires.

The differences remain; they may even be more sharply emphasized when a common life together must exclude the supreme common life of worship. But no one can go to Jerusalem and fail to be aware of how genuine and compelling is the love of Christ that draws so many people there, differing as they do in every way but this—that they, when asked what brought them all that way, can only answer that they would walk on the very soil that Christ has sanctified forever.

There is, too, an important work co-operation to be done in purely scientific fields, and especially in archaeology. A recent example is the joint expedition of the British School of Archaeology and the Ecole Biblique, under the joint leadership of Dr. Kathleen Kenyon and Père R. de Vaux, O.P., which is investigating the site of the ancient (Jebusite) city of Jerusalem. The findings of the archaeologists are of immense importance for biblical scholarship, it need hardly be said, but valuable, too, is the very fact of international co-ordination of effort. If the present discussions about the foundation of a university in Jordan bear fruit, it is in the field of archaeology that it can achieve greatest eminence, and the contributions of scholars from other countries will be essential.

The United Nations proposal to make Jerusalem an international city seems unlikely to be realized in a legal sense. But there is an even deeper sense in which Jerusalem belongs to the world, and all that makes for the peace of Jerusalem must evoke the sympathy and support of all.

Time of Christmas

Christmas is the love-time of the world,
a pointed season to foretell spring
in its round of glory, an octave
that holds eternity turned to man.

Adam brought us to this place, Adam
who sat on the bank of a river
and dreamed on goodness of life (Eden
will not exist for us) unable

to comprehend a graceless hour
(temptation finally had its way).
Eve knew all about it—her turn came
first, and after that, the others, big

and small, through the taproot of Jesse,
until at last Mary and Joseph
followed an empirical decree
to Bethlehem. Jesus, son of God,

not yet anointed with the heavy
oil of kingship, blinks his eyes and cries
like any child, making new Magi
of all, though we have no myrrh to bring.

DAVID A. LOCHER

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Church in Bondage

THOMAS WEYR

THE FIRST impression of Prague is still one of spectacular beauty. Gothic St. Vitus Cathedral pokes slim towers above the baroque facade of Hradcin Castle. Piercing spires and high domes reach into the sky; the metallic green of hunch-backed cupolas clashes with pigeon-grey Renaissance towers. As the train rattles across the Moldau, the sound of bells seems to echo through the warm haze of this city of churches whose glittering tapestry keeps alive the legend of the "golden town."

Like Rome, the core of Prague is minted in baroque with Gothic and Renaissance structures scattered like uncut jewels across the surface. Like Rome, too, Prague's churches give the city its most distinctive character. Religion has formed the place and has flourished within its walls; it has been hammered into the very cobblestones of its streets and has impressed its symbols into the landscape on both sides of the Moldau.

Prague has seen both the Church Defeated and the Church Triumphant. After two centuries of religious unrest and upheavals—from the brief triumph of the Hussites in the 15th century to the battle of the White Mountain in the 17th—the Counter-Reformation dazzled the city's Protestant burghers with a baroque splendor of gold and marble, silver and satin that remains to this day an unparalleled glory. The chipped and peeling facades of old houses, the red street signs, the drabness and dilapidation that has spread through the Staremesto and Mala Strana sections of the first district cannot tarnish its loveliness.

Yet it is a dead beauty. The faith that gave it fire and warmth, that made the lovely houses of God glow with religious fervor is gone. The splendor of the architecture has been dimmed by the secularization of Prague's best churches. Hordes of East German tourists tramping through St. Mikulas and St. Vitus, cameras clicking irreverently, are the mocking symbol of Communism's victory over the Church in Czechoslovakia.

Even more than in Hungary it is already a total victory. Church leadership has been splintered. The Council of Peace Priests that nominally heads the Church organization limits itself to fellow-traveling foreign policy pronouncements. Administration is handled by the Ministry of Education, where a Dr. Verner bosses Church affairs.

The regime has blocked the naming of new bishops as old ones die off. Management of dioceses is in the hands of vicar capitulars. All Church appointments are subject to official approval. Newly consecrated priests are required to swear an oath of allegiance to the Communist regime. Seminarians attend a lecture course in Marxism-Leninism. The number of student priests has been severely curtailed. Only fifty clergymen of all faiths are graduated a year. Before the war three hundred and fifty priests came from Roman Catholic seminaries alone.

The average age of priests has thus risen to the sixties. There is little guidance available for them; they care for their flock as best they can. Their loneliness must be terrible, for they are saddled with responsibilities and decisions not theirs to carry or make. Those whose sermons speak out boldly against the regime, even if in allegorical language, draw the largest crowds.

But congregations have dwindled in Prague and throughout Bohemia. No one working for the government or studying at a university may belong to an organized religion. In Central Europe, where nearly everybody is a government official—even streetcar conductors—this is a sizable group. Those who do go to church prefer anonymity.

IN PRAGUE, practicing Catholics board rickety red streetcars, a legacy from Emperor Franz Joseph's day, and ride across town to attend a church where chances are good that no one will recognize them. In the country, farmers bounce to neighboring villages on motorbikes to avoid being "caught" in church. Many come in after Mass has begun and leave quickly before it is over.

The great baroque churches that prance like massive golden bears above Bohemian villages count scarcely fifty people for Sunday Mass, where once five hundred was only an average congregation. In towns that once had two or three flourishing parishes, only one church is left open. The others have been turned into warehouses or museums. Things are better in Slovakia, a more backward and agricultural part of the nation. Churches there still overflow for Sunday Mass with the faithful crowding the steps outside the door.

On the whole, though, the Czechs have led a model

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campaign against the Church. Pressure is applied effectively and sparingly. The bulldozer approach has been abandoned in favor of gradual erosion. Church rights and privileges have been removed so subtly that few have noticed as each one slips away. The educated feel the pressure most, the old and illiterate hardly at all. You can still see Czech women in worn coats and black shawls cross themselves in streetcars passing a church.

But the work of destruction is most blatant in the churches themselves. Already many have been closed down in Prague itself. Others are in the process of being turned into museums, notably St. Vitus Cathedral and the gaudily beautiful St. Mikulas, early marked for destruction because it was built by Jesuits. Only one Mass is said at St. Mikulas weekdays and Sundays, at 7:30 a.m. In other downtown churches, St. Havel, St. Jiji and St. Frantisek, for example, there is a Sunday Mass at 11. St. Mary's has a High Mass at 10 o'clock.

Irreverence is carefully cultivated. Tourist groups clatter through the churches, their boots hacking the stone and their loud voices glancing off statuary and altars like blows. Guides give raucous explanations in the style of carnival barkers, praising the frescoes and soaring marble statues of saints as a Coney Island hawker would "sell" his bearded lady. Few visitors bother to dip their hand in the holy water fount at St. Mikulas or to genuflect before the altar. I saw one man remove his cap almost as an after-thought. Others did not bother to show even that slender respect.

There is conscious mockery in the explanation the guides give. One group of East German tourists was told that the "monks" who built St. Mikulas had so many side altars installed because they did not want to wait in line at the main altar to say their prayers. Since the rich contributed generously to the Church, funds were no problem. The obligatory line about the poor being squeezed to pay for priestly extravagance ended the Communist "sermon."

The satire and contempt are never absent and the laughter rolls back dutifully at each sally, spilling like dirty water out of a sewer between the pews and across the marble. The sense of desecration is all-pervasive.

Not even the respect due a museum is left intact. Only after a long silence does any feeling return to a church built with such rich sensuality and fluid motion that the first impact is of fireworks exploding in the sky. And then the emotion is dry, cold and empty as if the golden rays that burst above the altar had shot God through the roof.

The lofty grandeur of St. Vitus Cathedral—a little gothic isle in the baroque sea of Hradcin Castle—is crushed in the sweating carnival of a Sunday afternoon. Great hordes of people roll through the church and mill around the outside. Once inside the Cathedral one almost expects to find stands selling feathered hats and spun sugar, the mood of desecration is so rampant. The church is stripped bare as a corn husk of the religious awe which should flow from the vaulted ceilings and leaping arches, the massive yet airy pillars, the cold grace of stone. Even more than in the softer world of baroque, voices sound harsh here; its great size contributing to the football field manners.

ON THE SUNDAY I visited the Cathedral the Philharmonic had scheduled a concert there. A blue curtain had been drawn across the main altar. Sweating and swearing workmen were setting up row upon row of collapsible metal chairs after cordoning off the central nave from the crowds. The church was cleared of people as the concert hour approached. Still the work continued. Heavy boxes were dragged across the floor. Men shouted to each other as they put up the instrument stands and set down bass fiddles and harps on the improvised podium. A heavy woman with a silver tooth crawled out of the brown wooden box office set up near the entrance to the crypt, shouting at me to leave by the side door.

I returned on a weekday morning after Mass had been said. The mood had improved to the point where the Cathedral seemed again a church, but voices were still loud, careless and indifferent. The beauty of the Cathedral could shine only for moments.

Cathedrals in the Sunday crush are of course poor indicators of faith or lack of it. The permanent sideshows of Europe's great churches is a regrettable phenomenon born of twentieth-century commercialism. But even at its loudest the babble of voices in St. Peter's carries a muted tone of respect. And no one is ever left in doubt that cathedral or village church are places of worship first and museums second.

Some churches in Prague are also left intact spiritually. But walking into them I felt God lurking in a corner, unsure of how long this would remain His home. Religion has become fleeting, delicate and fragile; a thing to be caught on the run and to be thankful for having seen at all. I found it in the strangest places:

Walking across the Charles Bridge where serene saints and heroes stand guard on the balustrade I over-

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heard an East German tourist demand of his Czech guide: "Socialism has advanced so much farther in Czechoslovakia than it has at home. Why are most people here still Catholics?"

The woman with him, visibly embarrassed, explained that only old people still go to church, that religion is not taught in school, and that soon the whole ghost will disappear. Did the saints smile and the cupolas and towers grin delightedly at her discomfort? I thought so. The East German's question could only have been prompted by the rich display of religious imagery and symbolism that dominates the old city and burns with such intensity on the Charles Bridge.

Looking for Mass on a Sunday morning proved appropriately Kafkaesque. I visited five churches before finally stumbling into one where it was being said. The first two stood cold and empty; a third was closed. Candles burned on the altar of a fourth and a man and a woman, in widely separated pews, knelt in solitary prayer. As I left, a woman with a shopping bag over one arm entered hurriedly.

OUTSIDE, church bells were ringing. I tried to follow the sound, but it faded away. Finally I came to St. Mary's Retezem, a few streets away from the bridge. A small church overlaid with baroque, it stands some distance behind a Gothic archway. It was crowded, people standing in back and to the sides of the pews. The organ played a Bach Mass. The priest was gaunt, bent and white-haired, but his movements at the altar seemed quick and sure. People wore their Sunday best and looked devout, attentive, natural and normal. The only startling feature among those present was the total absence of the middle-aged. People were either old or very young. None looked between thirty-five and fifty, the generation now in power or just below it.

I remember most vividly the face of a boy about twenty, whose experience of the Mass seemed to me as strong and as intense as I imagine it must have been for the early Christians. He genuflected and turned toward the door after Mass with the dazzled and happy look of deeply felt emotion. Amid the abrasive contrast between the past of the stones and the present of their desecration, that much peace and joy seemed the best omen for some survival of faith in Prague.

Sadly the mood of hope and faith that continued down the path from the church to the archway disappeared again at St. Frantisek, a gilded lily of a church across the Charles Bridge in Staremesto. The altar here is thick with statuary and a rain of golden bolts keeps the dove of the Holy Ghost suspended high above the tabernacle. The congregation for eleven o'clock Mass was small, less than fifty in a church built for three hundred. There was a constant rustle of people coming and going; a nervous, restless shuffling that more than once made me glance uneasily over my shoulder wondering if anyone had come in to take notes on those present. Here too the priest was an old man with snow-white hair and a face like wrinkled yellow cheese. Most of the congregation were elderly, with one or two young people present.

Another afternoon in St. Havel, down the street from Staromestske Square, someone was tuning the organ. The place was nearly empty, perhaps half a dozen people—a few tourists and two old women seemingly spun in a world of their own sitting in the pews. Suddenly the monotonous and jarring wail of the tuning erupted into rich and sumptuous music that rammed everyone present erect and attentive. The tourist voices that had been loud a moment before dropped to a whisper. Somehow God had returned to St. Havel's. As long as the organ played people walked in as if they were really in church.

Nevertheless, future prospects are bleak. Archbishop Josef Beran, the primate, is still alive, but under house arrest. He has been out of touch with church affairs since the Communists seized him on the square outside the cathedral soon after assuming power.

Priests who speak out too openly against the government or the fellow-traveling church leadership are still subject to arrest. In 1960-61, a batch of jailed priests was released. But since then others have again wandered behind bars. Some of the young priests only recently out of school are bright and intelligent, according to the few Western diplomats in Prague who have managed to find a direct contact to the clergy. These young men are laboring earnestly and hard to keep the Faith alive. But they are too few, and the government's hand is too strong.

One Western diplomat believes that within fifteen years the Church in Czechoslovakia will have been reduced to fragments, a splinter group whose membership is recruited from peasants, the aged and the illiterate. It has already ceased to be a functioning organization, this diplomat thinks. And unless Czechoslovakia is shaken by some major upheaval, economic or political, this deterioration of Church authority and of its image among the people is sure to continue. In the end, if Communist tactics are successful, the Church would become merely quaint, unimportant and harmless. The number of Masses might even be increased to make churches better tourist attractions.

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"India, China and the U.S."

Albany, Calif.

TO THE EDITORS: I cannot understand your publishing an article revealing such unrealistic thinking as Richard Horchler in his "India, China and the U.S." [Nov. 23 issue].

He refers to the "pretense that the People's Republic of China does not exist." No one harbors such a belief. The admission of Red China to the U.N. boils down to two simple facts:

One: Some of the nations of the world sat down in San Francisco to establish an organization dedicated to the abolition of war and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means. There was no implied obligation to admit every country that exists. The fact that Soviet Russia's lip service to this thought proved to be false does not alter the intention of the U.N. Red China has never subscribed to this view, so there is no place in the U.N. for her.

Two: In Korea, Red China prosecuted a war against the United Nations. An armistice was arranged under President Eisenhower but no peace treaty has ever been signed and Red China has stubbornly resisted any attempts to eventuate one.

Why should the United Nations admit to its membership one who does not share its views and is still technically at war with it? This is the same fuzzy thinking which prompted the United States to force Chiang Kai-shek, while still on the mainland, to integrate Red Chinese politicians in his government and portions of their army with his. The result was his expulsion from the mainland and establishment of the Communistic government. All because it was claimed in our State Dept. that Mao Tse Tung was not a Communist—only an "Agrarian."

Articles of this kind undermine our confidence in anything printed in the magazine. HAL W. HALL

Philadelphia, Pa.

TO THE EDITORS: "India, China and the U.S." offers a surprising thesis for at least one reader acquainted with the Far East. It is well to be subtle in reasoning and inventive in policy. But, as Red China attacks India, the notion that this is just the time to throw Chiang over makes little sense.

Mr. Horchler suggests that we may have to go, with Great Britain, to India's assistance, now or later. Then why is this a good time to abandon a thorn in Mao's side, our flanking position on Taiwan? Surely we would not limit our operations to the area chosen by Red China? One would normally expect coordinated feints or attacks from South Korea, our Japanese bases and those on Okinawa, our allied jumping-off place in Formosa, and other points. That is, unless we wish to pretend that war is only a make-believe, as the Red Chinese obviously do not.

I note also the usual, tiresome denigration of the Chinese Nationalists on Taiwan, a Chinese province since the 17th century. They have put in effect a model land reform scheme, they have expanded education, and doubled food production. With it all, they give the ordinary citizen a degree of liberty, including religious freedom, which would be utterly unthinkable in any Communist area.

Why not support our friends, warts and all, against our declared enemies? PAUL JONES

Cambridge, Mass.

TO THE EDITORS: Too many Americans—including the author of "India, China and the U.S."—are still viewing the Chinese invasion of India as an outgrowth of its lack of United Nations membership, with the result that they dismiss the 5,000 square miles occupied in this massive assault as subject to "a tangle of centuries-old claims and counter-claims," and concentrate on the issues of Recognition and the Security Council seat. Certainly China should be at the U.N., but this will not change Chinese goals—hegemony in Asia, so well put by Mao in his writings (and Chiang, for that matter, in *China's Destiny*).

Mao's China has unlimited self-esteem, and other countries must now show due subservience—or else. Nehru's past unwillingness to prepare India to defend herself seems to have persuaded the new Chinese warlords that a "little" push (which cost India 5,000 lives and the Chinese twice that) would be sufficient to show him the true path.

There are no "claims and counter-claims" regarding the border. For reasons of its own, China was determined to humiliate India. She has succeeded. But the Himalayas remain India's northern boundary and will be secured, cost what it may. If Chinese "maps" are to be believed, large portions of Soviet Turkestan, Mongolia, Siberia and Thailand are also subject to "centuries-old claims." It should be noted that the Chinese Reds had no difficulty "correcting" their maps in reference to Burma or Nepal—or their new ally, Pakistan, where they have accepted the same traditional boundary India plans to defend. Anyone who doubts the firm-

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ness of the Indian case and the determination of the Chinese to obtain a military showdown has only to read the joint report of the India-China border commission which met in Peking in 1960.

In 1959, when Tibet had been secured and was garrisoned by some 300,000 fighting men, China announced that she disputed India's frontier. Chou En-lai even pointed out patiently that the reason this had not been done earlier, when on hundreds of occasions India had reaffirmed her alignment, was that "the time was not then ripe for a settlement." How blind we were!

In conclusion let me appeal to my American friends: Recognition of Red China, or her seat at the U.N. are minor issues compared to the survival of free institutions in Asia. Through no choice of her own, India is now the symbol of resistance to totalitarian expansionism—and she needs help!

JASWANT KRISHNAYYA

The Author Replies

New York, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: Most of the questions put to me by The Commonweal's correspondents I thought were answered in the article to which they object, but perhaps not clearly enough.

Mr. Hall's declaration that "the admission of Red China to the U.N. boils down to two simple facts" in the first place refers to an issue which was not quite the subject of my article. In the second place, I am afraid it is just not true. Almost nothing in the world boils down to two, or even three or four, "simple facts." Practically, the admission of Communist China to the U.N. will boil down to the votes of the U.N. membership—votes directed by numerous considerations—and the Chinese response to an invitation—a response directed by equally numerous considerations.

As for Mr. Hall's facts themselves, first, it is certainly true that Communist China would not seem to qualify for membership in the U.N. under the terms of the Charter, but then neither would many of the present members. Anyway, it is argued by many that the gentlemen's club idea of the U.N. is a mistake—which should be amended—if the organization is truly to be a world body, is to be effective in working for peace in the real, whole world. This view, incidentally, was urged by the late John Foster Dulles in his book *War or Peace*: "The United Nations will best serve the cause of peace if its Assembly is representative of what the world actually is, and not merely representative of the parts we like. . . . If the Communist government of China in fact proves its ability to govern China without serious domestic resistance, then it too should be admitted to the United Nations." Mr. Dulles published these words in 1950, repudiated them in 1953 before the Senate but republished them, interestingly, in the revised edition of his book in 1957. The second fact, about Korea, is also not simple—some of the complications were touched on in my article—but it is in any case only a fact (inadequately stated, I would say), not an argument for policy.

Mr. Hall's question, "Why should the United Nations admit to its membership one who does not share its views . . .?" is not, as he apparently thinks, rhetorical. Many answers have been given, the chief one being that such admission might advance the purposes of the U.N.

Concerning the fall of the Kuomintang, Mr. Hall and I read different histories. Chiang's spectacular collapse before the Communists is still, obviously, the subject of controversy, but I know of no commentators, even among those who think that more U.S. aid might have saved his government, who do not ascribe that collapse fundamentally to Nationalist inefficiency and corruption and consequent loss of popular support. By contrast, Mao's Communists *were* agrarian reformers, in addition to other less attractive things.

Mr. Jones misread what I had hoped were clear statements in the article. I never suggested that the U.S. abandon Taiwan. I wrote, "Certainly the U.S. is bound to protect Taiwan and the Pescadores from Communist invasion. . . ." The only basis I can find for the complaint of "denigration" of the Nationalists on Taiwan is my statement that the Nationalist leaders are "aging" and that their rule extended over "reluctant" Taiwanese. Chiang is seventy-six; his followers have also gotten older. That the Taiwanese are reluctant seems reasonable to infer from the violence used to establish Nationalist rule, subsequent anti-Nationalist uprisings, the prohibition and repression of political opposition, the existence of independence movements outside Taiwan, the refusal by Chiang to permit a plebiscite. The land reform and comparatively high standard of living on Taiwan are not to my knowledge the result of Nationalist efforts so much as of U.S. insistence and aid. And the degree of liberty enjoyed by the Taiwanese under the Nationalists may be more than that known under Communism (is that to be our criterion?), but it is apparently a good deal less than they would like.

The warts-and-all argument advanced by Mr. Jones has been the justification of U.S. support of Peron, Trujillo, Batista, Syngman Rhee and Ngo Dinh Diem. That all such anti-Communists are our friends is questionable; that their enemies are automatically our enemies, until we make them so, is also questionable; finally, that injustice, exploitation, totalitarianism and brutality may fairly be characterized as "warts" is also, and it is a mild word, questionable.

Mr. Krishnayya, in his understandable concern that India be helped by its friends in this time of danger, has, I think, misunderstood my points. A reader of even recent history finds it hard to accept his statement that there have been no claims and counter-claims in regard to the Sino-Indian borders, but I agree with him fully,

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and said so in my article, that India must be supported against China, and that admission of Communist China to the U.N. would not change its goal of Asian hegemony. I said, "And most certainly an alteration of present U.S. China policy would not mean that Peking would surrender its dreams and plans for an all-Asia Chinese Communist empire." The following sentence was, "Nevertheless, with no illusions about what may be expected from the Communists in consequence of U.S. recognition, I am convinced that such action would be advantageous in terms of our, and the world's, best interests." This is very like Mr. Krishnayya's own observation, "Certainly China should be at the U.N., but this will not change China's goals. . . ." RICHARD HORCHLER

"The Identity of James Baldwin"

Jackson Heights, New York

TO THE EDITORS: In his article on the work of James Baldwin [Oct. 26], James Finn quotes Baldwin as saying, in regard to the depiction of human beings: "In overlooking, denying, evading his complexity—which is nothing more than the disquieting complexity of ourselves—we are diminished and we perish; only within this web of ambiguity, paradox, this hunger, danger, darkness, can we find at once ourselves and the power that will free us from ourselves."

This is unfortunately what Baldwin has not done in his latest novel *Another Country*. Finn writes that "All of the characters in *Another Country* are in serious trouble." At another point he refers to Baldwin's "great and penetrating insights." But it is obvious, I think, from the novel itself, as well as from the interview Baldwin gave the New York *Post*, that Baldwin does not agree with Finn. He seems to see the conclusion of the novel, the possibility of marriage between the white Vivaldo and the Negro Ida as an affirmative ending, symbolizing his own acceptance of harmony and understanding between Negro and white. There is no indication in the book that Baldwin sees Vivaldo's relation with Ida as masochistic, nor that he finds the sentimental, forced affection of Eric's and Vivaldo's homosexual episode, as well as the whole idyllic affair between Eric and Yves, as anything but the way he describes them. How can Baldwin be saying that "the society which produces such people is itself in serious trouble," if he finds nothing wrong with them; in fact, does not himself penetrate to the sickness underlying their conduct?

I do not think that this novel can be understood by ascribing to it the high intentions that Mr. Finn does. I agree entirely about Baldwin's insight, and that he "deals . . . with the American experience, with the relation between the person and society, race and sex, with the great question of identity—'Who am I'." But these attributes rarely come through *in this novel*. Baldwin is too emotionally involved with these characters. He likes and identifies with them. It seems clear that he likes Cass as a decent white liberal woman and dislikes Richard, her husband, as a liberal in the process of degeneration. We know too his favorable attitudes toward Eric, Yves, Vivaldo and Ida. But we know his feelings rather than the characters themselves. Often the evidence he presents for his liking them does not convince us. Baldwin as an artist wants to present the paradox, the hunger, danger and darkness, but Baldwin the human being intervenes and imposes his own needs in place of his art.

As to Baldwin's future as a novelist, there are some indications that we have much to look forward to. More distinguished than his previous novels are the short stories, "Sonny's Blues" and "This Morning, This Evening, So Soon," both recently anthologized in *Fiction of the Fifties*, edited by Herbert Gold (Anchor Books) and *Best Short Stories of 1961*, edited by Martha Foley (Ballantine Books). I think that they are among the most poignant and outstanding stories any writer has produced for a decade. And there is the character of Rufus Scott, at the beginning of *Another Country*, whose tortured battle to stay alive in an alien society has an impact that lingers as we plod through the rest of the novel. This character is perhaps the subject of the novel Baldwin should have written. There *is* ambiguity in Rufus, but it is uncolored by explanation, apology and sentiment.

I believe, then, that Baldwin has not yet come to grips with the material in novel form that he treats with such eloquence in the essay and short story. It is indeed the "great question of identity—'Who am I?'" that Baldwin as a novelist has yet to deal with adequately.

No writer has made a deeper impression on my generation than James Baldwin. We revere his understanding, his moral passion, and his unforgettable gifts as a writer. At this point I think he does not need further praise or condemnation, but some degree of *understanding* of why his intention and accomplishment have not become one in the novel form. DAVID EVANIER

The Author Replies

New York, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: Many of Mr. Evanier's differences with me are more apparent than real, and to me some

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are not even apparent. In fact we seem to be more in agreement with each other than either is with most people who have commented in print on Baldwin's latest book. Still, there are some points that invite clarification.

The gravamen of Mr. Evanier's first paragraph is that the characters in *Another Country* are not in serious trouble, or rather that Baldwin does not think so because "he finds nothing wrong with them." Well, let's look at some of the principal characters. Rufus Scott, after a highly troubled life commits suicide; Leona, his white mistress, is committed to a mental institution; Richard Silenski sells out as a novelist and the basis for his marriage is pulled out from under him; his wife Cass loses her respect for him and is unable to answer the charge that Ida brings against her—that she is ignorant of much of life; Yves waits for his lover, who is arriving from France, knowing that the affair is headed for dissolution in N.Y.; and there are a host of minor characters who squander their lives in a fruitless search for kicks from sex, drink, dope. This is serious trouble. There is some hope held out for Vivaldo and Ida, but even people in trouble are not denied hope. No. These people *are* in serious trouble and it can scarcely be a secret from the author whose creatures they are.

I agree, to go on to Mr. Evanier's next paragraph, that the novel is not wholly successful, that too frequently we know Baldwin's feelings about the characters rather than the characters themselves. But it is nonsense to say that it is because he is too emotionally involved with them. Rufus is a real, moving, breathing person and clearly Baldwin is more involved with him than with the wooden Richard Silenski. The reasons for artistic failure are not so simply disposed of.

I agree—in fact, I stated at length—that Baldwin has not been as successful in his novels as in many of his essays and, I would add, his short stories. But the observation is not very helpful.

Mr. Evanier's last paragraph inspires not only agreement but awe, at least in me who am always awed by someone who can speak for an entire generation with such authority. As for what Baldwin needs "at this point"—"some degree of understanding"—it is of course what every writer needs and what every critic should attempt.

JAMES FINN

AN APPEAL: After twenty years "fighting hunger and building native leadership" in the impoverished Caribbean, Father John Peter Sullivan, S.J., needs a demonstration center to provide intensive courses in credit union and other successful cooperative techniques. This would build self-help throughout the area. Gifts may be sent to Father Sullivan at the Social Action Centre, 2 Olivier Road, Kingston, 8, Jamaica, B.W.I. (Airmail 15c)

THE STAGE

Pinter's Hits—and Misses

THE THING hardly anybody seems to have noticed about the plays of Harold Pinter is that what is so effective about them is also the source of much that is unsatisfying. At his best, Pinter is a dramatist of high urgency, clear color and unimpeachable intentions. He has the right kind of dissatisfactions and impenitences, the accurate chimeras, the anxieties, hungers and vertigos proper to our time. And he has a high degree of freedom from the expectations of audiences, an aloofness from the theater conceived of as a place of mutual congratulation, a toughness, or blessed innocence, to resist most of the pressures to make his plays serve other purposes than their own—to prevent them from "commenting" on our condition, or offering explanations or providing us with solace.

He is among the most talented playwrights of the English revival, along with N. F. Simpson and John Arden, neither of whose work, however, we have seen enough of to be able to judge as confidently as we do of Pinter. He has done what Edward Albee has only half done—he has broken through to a new dimension of drama, which means a present dimension of experience. The theater is so suffocating today because it continues for the most part to take up and arrange what we no longer feel, or are involved in only anachronistically. Pinter's plays introduce us to a reality we do recognize as our own, though it is one which we cannot truly know until someone like him gives it its proper telling shape outside us.

Yet in Pinter the action is not in fact much more than an introduction, the beginning of recognition and affect and change. The shapes he creates are skeletal and unfinished, as though they have known what not to be but do not yet know what to become. Having stripped away much of what is exhausted in conventional drama, having made a psychology that confirms or explains yield to a metaphysics that invokes, and having made the logic of narrative continuity yield to the terrifying arbitrariness of the way we really experience the world, Pinter hovers still on the threshold of a theater of new events and new portrayals. Unlike Ionesco and Beckett, in whose light, especially the latter's, he has so clearly worked, he has been unable to do more than present the *reverse* side of existence, the underskin of emptiness that sheathes our habitual gestures and spent meanings.

"The Caretaker," with its strange terrors and pities and hints of significance within a scene of almost total bareness, and yet with its central failure to remain consistently in its chosen genre—the revelation of Aston's shock treatment betraying Pinter's fall from the high

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vire of a refusal to *explain*—exhibits his special gifts ınd deficiencies on a much larger scale than the two ɔne-acters now being presented in the Village. But at east one of the latter, "The Dumbwaiter," just because t is earlier, shorter and purer than "The Caretaker," ;ives us an especially direct sense of what he intends ınd strives for but cannot quite achieve.

The other play, "The Collection," is Pinter playing 'inter, a lapse from his originality and severity of pur-ɔose, a schematic exercise which results in a thoroughly ınintentional sense of parody. It purports to be an ex-ımination of the nature of reality and illusion, some-vhat reminiscent of the Japanese *Rashomon*, in that the ɔarticipants in an event have conflicting stories to tell. 3ut "The Collection" is more pretentious. A married voman did or did not have an assignation with a young nan in a Leeds hotel. If she did, why does she deny it? f she didn't, why does she say she did, and, moreover, ;ive several versions of what happened? And why does he youth similarly alternate between confession and lenial? What really happened?

There is of course no answer. What there is, hope-ully, is the communication of an experience of doubt, ı breaking down of categories, a vision of fluidity and nsubstantiality in our relation to the truth. But Pinter loesn't trust his vision enough to allow it to exist in he very grain and substance of the play. As in all his work, the air is thick with menace, but here it is factiti-ɔus and imposed. Instead of arising from our being nade aware of the abyss between the world and our neans of apprehending it, the menace is manufactured, listilled from a great deal of reductive stage business, cnife fights, mysterious phone calls, sudden reversals of ɔehavior and cryptic smiles. We are not left with a sense ɔf having witnessed orders of experience or faculties ɔf the self come into collision, but with the fragments ɔf a philosophic melodrama in which the thought and he action never fuse.

In "The Dumbwaiter" Pinter is strong, unschematic ınd effective. There is no working out of a philosophy, ɔr an anti-philosophy, no "explanation" that there is no explanation. In a shabby basement room two hired killers await their next victim, who is unknown to them ınd whose arrival will be signaled by their shadowy employer. To pass the time they comment on items in he newspaper, discuss previous jobs, quarrel over whether one "lights the kettle" or "lights the gas" in naking tea. Their trivial, banal conversation is of the ɔrder of those in "The Caretaker," although less de-iberately stripped and denotative.

Yet its basic effect is the same: an intensification of he alarm we feel at our failure to match our language :o our true experience. Similarly, when the men discover ı speaking tube and a dumbwaiter in the room and ɔegin to receive orders for exotic dishes to be sent up (the place had been a restaurant) the absurdity of our categories of action, the division between the "serious" and the trivial, becomes farcically and disturbingly heightened. The men try desperately to placate the unseen powers, shoving canned food, biscuits, chocolate bars onto the dumbwaiter, while their impending job of murder hangs menacingly over everything.

In the end one man goes to the washroom, the other receives word that the first person who comes through the other door is to be shot, the door opens and in staggers the killer who has just left; he is the intended victim.

The play is greatly interesting for its fusion of terror and farce and for its movement beyond naturalism into a climate of indirection and metaphysical implication. (It is played here a little too broadly, too much like Laurel and Hardy, by John C. Becher and Dana Elcar, with the result that some of the dread is dispelled; "The Collection," on the other hand, is acted tautly and effectively, especially by Henderson Forsythe and James Ray.) But it remains on the edge of fullness; it is less a complex equivalent of our experience than a taut and suggestive minor fable about it. When Pinter comes to fill in the space he has hollowed out by scooping away the expected, the connotative and the logical, when he locates the unexpected and illogical in an incontrovertible atmosphere of its own, he may astonish and transform us, instead of simply unsettling us and giving us a glimpse of new avenues, rare and valuable as that is. (*At the Cherry Lane*) RICHARD GILMAN

THE SCREEN

"We Are the Hollow Men"

AS USUAL at this time of year, new releases are rushed to our screens; and the overworked reviewer, lucky if he can *see* all the films, has hardly enough space or time to write about them. Here is a roundup of arrivals from abroad, most of which deserve more complete coverage. "Eclipse" certainly does. It is the latest work of Michelangelo Antonioni, the Italian director who is one of the most provocative of the world's film makers.

Audiences who saw Antonioni's earlier "L'Avventura" and "La Notte," will realize that "Eclipse" is more of same and continues his investigation of the decline of feelings and emotions in our time. Actually, Antonioni considers the three films, which have different stories and characters but are similar in concentrating on the frustrations and futilities of today's society, as a trilogy. Having the slightest story of the three, "Eclipse" is mainly about a young, emancipated girl who works as a translator and lives in one of those handsome, sterile apartments in a new section of Rome; at the picture's beginning she leaves her lover of the past four years be-

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cause she no longer loves him; and then slowly, cautiously, she proceeds to fall in love with a good-looking, young stockbroker, a steely, ambitious man whom she loves and leaves at the height of their affair.

Even more than the other two films which mingled plot and place and atmosphere, "Eclipse" is concerned with locale—not the old Rome of the Caesars or the Church, but modern Rome. And director Antonioni is more interested in it than in characters or story. Attractive Monica Vitti and Alain Delon act well as the restless, loving young couple; but their performances are mannered. The supporting cast is good too, in a superficial sort of way. But Antonioni's use of place is superb. And the black-and-white photography is first-rate as the camera concentrates again and again on the hectic, nerve-racking Bourse, on the slick modern parts of Rome, on the empty nothingness and discontent of society. I'm glad that Antonioni has finished his brilliant trilogy—which ends with a long, wordless finale during which the camera wanders in the half-dark over the soulless buildings and streets and objects that have eclipsed man. Perhaps when Antonioni moves on to his next project, he will find some ray of hope for contemporary man. There is none in "Eclipse."

THERE IS NO hope in "No Exit" either. But Jean-Paul Sartre, who wrote the play on which George Tabori based this movie script, didn't want to find any. His plot is about three people in an existentialist hell—not Antonioni's living hell of unhappy boredom, but another kind of living hell in which three vicious people are confined in one room and spend their eternity tearing each other apart. The three, a journalist (Morgan Sterne), a selfish society matron (Rita Gam), and a Lesbian (Viveca Lindfors) are self-deluding people responsible for the deaths of others and now stuck with each other in this hell where there is no death. While all this has a certain macabre fascination, "No Exit" fails as a movie. Using good cinema technique, it introduces flashbacks showing these three at their worst, but once the camera leaves the confines of this terrible room, the claustrophobic pain of wrangling and ennui is considerably lessened for the audience—"No Exit" should have had no such exits.

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ALSO GRIM and forbidding but more fascinating is a film from Ireland, "The Quare Fellow," much of which takes place in a Dublin prison during the last week of a man condemned for murder. We never see the man but we do get the reactions of the other prisoners, a senior warden (Walter Macken) who disapproves of capital punishment, a new junior warden (Patrick McGoohan) about to see his first hanging, and the wife of the condemned man (Sylvia Sims). Well directed by Arthur Dreifuss, who also wrote the script from Brendan Behan's play, "The Quare Fellow" has occasional faults as a movie, but its drama is gripping and its study of prison life is thoughtfully disturbing.

FROM GREECE has come an extraordinarily beautiful film produced and directed by Michael Cacoyannis. His "Electra" is faithful to the Euripides tragedy about adultery, vengeance and matricide, but it is also told in good cinema terms. Much of the action takes place outdoors, and the photography of Walter Lassally is superb. The cast, led by Irene Papas in the title role, is good throughout. This is a picture not to be missed—and a treat for scholars as well as newcomers to Euripides' tale of woe.

THE FRENCH, who have been turning up with some fine, thoughtful movies recently, show that they can still make clinkers. "Seven Capital Sins," for which one might have high hopes since it lists among its writers Ionesco, Claude Mauriac, Jean-Luc Godard, and others, is little more than a series of jokes about anger, gluttony, envy, etc. In spite of its good directors and the various fine actors who appear in the seven episodes, the film as a whole is slight—and worse yet, often tasteless and dull. More's the pity that all this talent was so wasted.

PROBABLY "Candide" should not have been made—certainly not in this modern version directed and adapted by Norbert Carbonnaux. Voltaire's satire about the best in this best of all possible worlds has an intense wit that often makes even disinclined readers sit up and take notice. This up-dated adaptation comes out more like a collection of salacious and obvious episodes. Not even the strained efforts of Jean-Pierre Cassel in the title role can save such a listless, plodding movie.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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Genial Hosts to Pride and Company

The Seven Deadly Sins. By W. H. Auden, Cyril Connolly and others. William Morrow & Co. $3.50.

by Leonard F. X. Mayhew

IT DOES not seem likely that anyone will approach this collection expecting to find a conventional theological treatise. Judging from the impressive list of authors, however, some potential reader may be moved as I was—to anticipate a serious effort to achieve some new insight into what David Jones calls our curiously parenthetical human condition, with its complex mixture of dignity, weakness and malice. I am afraid that my conjectural optimist will feel—as I felt—a little let down. I found these essays from the London *Sunday Times* a concert of offbeat comment with a few very happy high points and some mild entertainment.

Only two of the pieces satisfy the need for clearly defined form that the mind demands in comment of this type: Edith Sitwell on Pride and Cyril Connolly on Covetousness. In every other way, however, their contributions could not be more dissimilar. Dame Edith has written a brilliant comment by indirection that concentrates on the "virtue" of pride, personal dignity and the ugliness of false humility. She braces her view of "pride in humility" by contrasting it with Iago, the "epitome in all literature of wicked pride," and by references to Blake ("The pride of the peacock is the glory of God."), Goethe ("man . . . the first conversation that nature holds with God."), and W. B. Yeats ("What had the Caesars but their thrones?").

What emerges clearly is that Dame Edith's view originates not in silly social custom or arty eccentricity but in a just evaluation of the ineffable dignity of man, equally obscured by wicked pride or self-devouring baseness. Caricatured individuality as against faceless conformism, and a cult of the absurd that rejects man as an irrelevant abstraction have come so close to acceptance that her reminder of a different sense of man would be most welcome, even if it were not so subtly conceived.

Cyril Connolly's piece on covetousness, the best in the book, is a parable in short story form. In "The Downfall of Jonathan Edax" a middle-aged miser has found, so he believes, the answer to the "you can't take it with you" saw. He will endow a small closed museum with literary memorabilia and antiques collected in a lifetime of cheating, lying and outright thievery. His anxiety for a particularly beguiling Queen Anne teapot leads to his downfall and death.

At first the story seems almost slapstick, the moral type is so cleanly drawn and without relief. Gradually it grows clear that it is a parable, quite realistic in its own genre. Connolly is dead serious as he chronicles the overwhelming isolation, the "anal-eroticism," of greed which finally shatters Edax's personality. Covetousness, he is saying, is a capital vice not merely because it is wicked, but because it spawns evil.

Patrick Leigh-Fermor, writing on Gluttony, contributes a witty tongue-in-cheek-by-jowl hymn to the charms of the table, a real *tour de force* almost childlike in its amazement that the temptation should indeed be so fair. Angus Wilson sees Envy as negative and impotent because essentially imitative. He suggests, perhaps justly, that its prevalence may account for the evident lack of originality in many areas. Christopher Sykes attempts some theological speculation in modern dress in his essay on Lust. He tries to work up to and then out from a definition of capital sin, but without much confidence or success. W. H. Auden writes of Anger with the elegance we expect, but his contribution is random and uneven and overly personal. His thinking on the retributive justice of penal law and its analogy with the popular notion of the "wrath of God" is interesting, but far too sketchy.

My greatest disappointment was with Evelyn Waugh's comment on Sloth. He begins well enough, apart from erroneously equating the capital vices with "the Mortal Sins." Too quickly, however, his essay turns into a carping, nagging complaint against the Welfare State, post-war England, the literary profession and "browned-off and bloody-minded" soldiers who are, presumably, less diligent at posturing than were gentlemen at arms.

The title page reproduces a fifteenth-century woodcut of an allegory of the seven deadly sins. One leg forms a gigantic claw, the other a sabre-toothed serpent. From the figure's waist a wolf and a dog leer obscenely. Hideous bat wings grow from the shoulders and a glittering crown labeled Pride tops the dreadful vision. The face, however, is that of a vapid and clearly bored young woman who sports long tresses of naturally curly hair. The vision is gone. It is not frightening, not awful, just a little disappointing, like the book.

Literary Leopard of Palermo

Two Stories and a Memory. By Guiseppe di Lampedusa. Translated by A. Colquhuon, with a foreword by E. M. Forster. Pantheon. $3.95.

by Martin Tucker

IN HIS SHORT introduction, E. M. Forster admits to an austere pleasure. Although Lampedusa's *The Leopard* enriched Forster's life, this new book is "not a second masterpiece." Yet the collection, obviously designed to capitalize on the interest generated by Lampedusa's one and only masterpiece, also has its share of pleasures—an elegance of prose, an aura of nobility, and parentheses of literary insight. The volume consists of a long reminiscence, "Places of My Infancy," written after the bombing and looting in World War II of Lampedusa's ancestral palace in Palermo; a witty story, "The Professor and the Mermaid";

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and the first chapter of an uncompleted novel, "The Blind Kittens," concerning the rise to power of a bourgeois moneyed class that was to tie its fortunes to Fascism.

What emerges from the book is the spirit of a writer whose life contained no overt mystery, no scandal, and no psychologically-ridden past. Lampedusa began writing at an age when most writers' lives are spent. Yet if his literary ambition was late in consummating itself, his preparation began early in life when he stored up memories against a period of drought. As Lampedusa says, "I was a boy who loved solitude, who liked the company of things more than of people . . . I would wander through the vast ornate house as in an enchanted wood."

Thus the personality emerges. Lampedusa loved, but his love drew him inward. He shored up the past in preparation for the losses he must have known were foreordained. A paralysis of movement but not of spirit gripped him. Even as a child he must have believed in that famous line he wrote for *The Leopard* —"If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change." Yet like his old hero, Don Fabrizio, Lampedusa could do no more than gaze at and appreciate the turbulence beneath him. Quietly he compromised with the present, by ignoring it, in his attempt to hold onto the past.

No doubt "The Professor and the Mermaid" will prove the most pleasing piece in the book. It is an ironic tale of a young man who loses two mistresses by sleeping with one and carrying the love note of another; in his loss he takes to the café where he talks to an old, seemingly detached professor of antiquities. The duet between the two men is the core of the story. In their unlikely friendship, the young man who in his life has experienced only lust learns of the single love the old man has known.

In his youth the professor had been greeted one morning by the arrival of a mermaid at the back of a summer seaside house. He and the mermaid shared a passionate love affair for twenty days. Then as a tremendous storm broke, Lighea turned back to the sea. She calle after her lover to follow her; sh promised him immortality, but h refused. As the professor finishes hi story, he vows he will not forfeit hi second opportunity. He is taking sea trip in a short while.

The story is brief and elegant, bu it is more than that. It is Lampe dusa's spirit revealed again. The pro fessor, having dedicated himself t an age whose achievements hav passed, realizes that he has robbe himself of a future. Although th professor literally spits on the non sense of his own time, he knows hi flight to antiquity has been an escap from life, not an ascent above it The professor, Don Fabrizio of *Th Leopard*, and Lampedusa himsel are all of one kind: they are dedi cated to the beauty of achievement not the achievement of beauty.

The spirit that moved Lampedusa was the spirit that moved Proust and Henry James. Unless more manu scripts are discovered in his Sicilia house, his work will be represente only by these two books. It is no a record to be ashamed of.

American Mid Cult

Against the American Grain by *Dwight Macdonald. Random House $6.50.*

by David I. Segal

DWIGHT Macdonald, in the pre face to his new collection, claim for these essays a common theme the effect of mass culture on hig culture. What a dreary prospect! I sometimes think that the circulatio of the *Saturday Evening Post* i swelled by the army of intellectual who must descend, each week, o their magazine store to get raw material for their next acerbic essay (And the book columns of "little mag azines" are lengthened by reviews o books made from those essays.) Tha Macdonald has found a distinctio between mass culture and what h calls "mid cult" (which he nicel defines as "serious and ambitious works of no quality") is no real help. Concentration on "mid cult" merely raises the intellectual level of his material one notch.

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It is the vigor and wit of his style, and the cleverness with which he chooses his examples that separates Macdonald from most of his fellow investigators. At the end of a judicious massacre of "Our Town" he quotes, "There's something way down deep that's eternal about every human being," and comments, "The last sentence is an eleven-word summary, in form and content, of 'mid cult.' I agree with everything Mr. Wilder says but I will fight to the death against his right to say it in this way." This is Macdonald at his best. He has a nose for vulgarity, and can define it with precision. The pity is that, saying this, one has said the best that can be said about him.

Most of these pieces originally appeared in *The New Yorker,* and they show the effects of the excessive generosity of that journal's review columns. *The New Yorker* provides too much space for its critics (other magazines provide too much space for critics of *The New Yorker*), and this space is frequently used to drown the reader in information. This prodigality is particularly evident in a section of Macdonald's book called "Heroes/victims" which deals with writers of the first class.

The occasion for one of these essays was the publication of a new editing of Mark Twain's autobiography. It very quickly becomes a tip-sheet on Twain criticism, a glib formulation of the reasons for his continuing popularity, and a sketchy attempt to put him in a tradition of American letters. Macdonald has gotten the subject up for this occasion. He informs without enlightening.

This lack of insight is even more embarrassingly apparent in a review of Richard Ellman's *James Joyce,* where a pointless personal anecdote and a lot of literary name-dropping substitutes for critical insight. Again, in a piece on Hemingway (originally in *Encounter*) he says a great many astute things about Hemingway's manner, but nothing about his matter. Later in the book we have his famous bombing of *By Love Possessed,* a subject more on a level with his sensibilities. He does a brilliant job on Cozzens' sentence structure, vocabulary and intellectual equipment. While this demolition job was desperately needed when the piece first appeared in *Commentary,* I wish that Macdonald had managed to say something enlightening about the puzzle of the book's success.

These articles share no discernible attitudes or sensibility. The book does contain a section which differs from his *ad hoc* journalism. Called "Betrayals," it contains papers dealing with the Hutchins and Adler "Great Books" program, recent revisions of the Bible and the Third Edition of the Webster Unabridged. These essays share an appalling sentimentality about the past. Macdonald seems to take all changes in language and diction as a personal affront. He will not distinguish between the shock of newness and the pain of the bad.

Writing about the Revised Standard Version of the Bible he says, "The prophet Nathan's terrible denunciation of King David, 'Thou art the man!' collapses in the police-report, 'You are the man' and God's solemn words to Adam, 'Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return' are flattened in the conversational, 'You are dust, and to dust you shall return'." This straining is surely after gnats. Macdonald's discussion of the Webster Third loses most of its value by his dismissal of Structural Linguistics. Macdonald simply asserts, over and over, that the function of a dictionary is prescriptive, not descriptive. He doesn't seem able to accept the idea that yesterday's bad usage is today's proper usage.

During the years when politics was Macdonald's subject, his was a fresh voice, trying to make practical and moral sense out of the contemporary scene. He made mistakes, but they were mostly his own and frequently his very errors were enlightening. His work seemed based on a stronger intellectual framework, and it made greater demands on the intellectual capacities of his audience. Now his prose is clearer, but he is saying less. In this change can be found proof (if proof is still needed) of the pernicious effects of middle-brow culture. When his subject was politics he was published primarily in journals of "high" culture. Now most of his essays appear in *The New Yorker,* which is, in its reviews, the pre-eminent magazine of "mid culture." One wonders at whom Macdonald is aiming his arrows.

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